

REASONS

PROPOS'D to the

Drapers by the Clothiers,

For Amending and Explaining an Act made in the Tenth Year of Her Majesty's Reign, Entituled An Act for Regulating, Improving, and Encouraging the Woollen Manufacture of Mixt or Medly Broad-Cloth: Humbly Offer'd to the Consideration of the Honourable House of Commons, &c.

WHEREAS, by the aforesaid Act, the Owner or Occupier of every Fulling Mill, is the sole Measurer of all mixt or medly Broad-Cloth:

The Drapers object, That these Mill-men are not at all qualified for so great a Trust, because of their constant Dependence upon the Clothiers for Employment.

To rectifie this pretended Abuse, the Clothiers propose that a Measuring-Table be erected in every Market Town, where the Clothing Trade is Used or Exercised, for the Use of that Town and adjacent Parishes, for the Examining, Trying and Ascertaining the Lengths and Breadths of all Stamp'd Cloth that comes Wet from the Fulling-Mill; and that the Merchants and Drapers, or the major Part of them, shall or may nominate two or three Persons, and return their Names to two or more Justices of the Peace of the same Division or District, who shall appoint one of them to be an Inspector to Examine, Try and Ascertaint the Lengths and Breadths of all mixt or medly Broad-Cloth, by fixing on the said Cloth a Seal of Lead, whereon he shall Stamp his Name with the Water-length and Breadth of the Cloth, which shall be a Rule of Payment to all Buyers.

The Charge of erecting the said Tables and Stamps, and likewise the Salary of the said Inspector, or Inspectors, shall be defrayed by laying a Duty of $\frac{1}{2}$ Penny per Cloth, to be paid by the Maker or Owner of the said Cloth at the time of Measuring.

The said Inspectors to be annually Chosen, and to take the same Oath as the Mill-men are obliged to take, and to continue one whole Year, unless convicted of Perjury, upon which another shall be chose in his stead.

That no Cloth be exposed to Sale, without the Seal of the Mill-man and Inspector on it, and that no Clothier be present at the Inspector's Measuring-Table, during the Measuring of his own, or any other Clothier's Cloth, under the Penalty of one Moiety to the Informer, and the other to the Poor of the Parish where the Offence is committed.

And in Order to obviate all Frauds that may be committed by counterfeiting the Inspector's Stamps, he shall Register the Name of the Maker, with the Number, Length and Breadth of the said Cloth, in a Book kept for that purpose, and shall transmit a weekly Account of the Particulars of every the said Cloths so measured to the Keeper of Blackwell-Hall, who shall regularly File the same to be seen by all Buyers of Cloth.

We also beg Leave to represent to your Honours, that if the Bill is framed to the aforesaid Propositions, the Merchants and Drapers will gain one Yard in twenty for which they will pay nothing.

WHEREAS the Drapers have reported to several Members of this Honourable House of Commons, that Five Clothiers have made an Agreement with them in the Name of the Whole, we declare that the said Agreement was clandestinely made, without our Knowledge, Consent, or Approbation; as appears by a Petition delivered to the Honourable Robert Hyde, Esq; and other Papers signed by all the substantial and noted Clothiers of Trowbridge, Bradford, and Westbury, Frome, Warminster, and Hatesbury, and Places adjacent, in the Counties of Wilts and Somerset.

Which said Agreement consists of two unreasonable Articles, viz. To allow half a Yard of Cloth from the Water-length to the Drapers of London and Westminster, upon Condition that it should not extend to the Merchants and Drapers in the Country, where they sell the greatest part of the Cloth; by which it is apparent that the Country Traders are put upon a very unequal Foot which those of the City of London; and the other subjects the Clothiers to several great Penalties, which will be of fatal Consequence to the Woollen Manufacture.